

AGENDA



Thursday, February 14, 2008

**Health and Human Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 10**

Subject: Approve an ordinance authorizing acceptance of \$567,132 in grant funds from the TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, TRAFFIC OPERATIONS DIVISION; and amending the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Health and Human Services Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund of Ordinance No. 20070910-003 to appropriate \$567,132 for the Health Promotion/Disease Unit to implement a Safe Routes to School Program implementation.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding is available from the Texas Department of Transportation, Traffic Operations Division. The grant period is November 1, 2007 through October 31, 2010. No City match is required.

Fiscal Note: Fiscal note is attached.

For More Information: Shannon Jones, Asst. Director for Public Health and Community Services, 972-5416; Len Trevino, Program Manager, 972-5125; Linda Terry, Agenda Coordinator, 972-5023.

The Texas Department of Transportation allocated funds to the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) and City of Austin Public Works (PW) for the implementation of Safe Routes to School Programs (SRTS). These programs enable and encourage children in grades K-8, including those with disabilities, to walk and/or bicycle to school and foster healthy lifestyle changes at an early age.

The HHSD project will implement four of the five National Safe Routes to School principles (Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation). The City of Austin Public Works Department will implement the fifth principle (Engineering).

HHSD's goals include:

- Creating a Safe Routes to School Community Coalition made up of key community partners in the Austin and Travis County area. The Coalition will provide input into the SRTS media campaign, participate with the program evaluation, and create a SRTS sustainability plan for implementation after October 31, 2010.
- Conducting best practice interventions to children, parents and drivers in targeted schools in the City of Austin. Schools were chosen based on percentage of obese and at risk of being obese students as well as other factors including the high percentage of children who walk to school. Schools geographically situated in neighborhoods that have the potential to increase the number of students walking and riding bicycles to school also played a role in the selection of target schools.
- Increasing the percentage of children in grades K-8 that walk or bicycle to school in the ten targeted schools in Austin.
- Conducting a community-wide social marketing and media campaign designed to raise awareness of the importance of walking or bicycling to school and to change the habits of drivers in school zones.